



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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**AGENDA ITEM:
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS**

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Madam Chair,

Jamaica welcomes the opportunity to participate in the debate on this agenda item. We would like to make some additional points to those already made in the statement delivered by Guyana on behalf of CARICOM, with which we fully align ourselves.

Madam Chair,

We have read, with great interest, the Secretary-General's Report contained in A/74/187. It correctly draws attention to several critical elements, which fully resonate with my delegation, as we personally struggle with the devastating impacts of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The gravity of the situation in my country is made manifest by the fact that Jamaica, which is neither a manufacturer nor a net importer of small arms, continues to see high homicide rates, the majority of which involve the use of a firearm. Increased ammunition recovery and seizures by the Police and spent shells at crime scenes also reveal a proliferation of illicit ammunition being used to perpetuate these crimes. For us, therefore, the Committee's deliberation on this agenda item is more than just the delivery of another statement. It is the opportunity to reiterate why the support of the UN system and the international community in particular, are so critical.

Madam Chair,

The Secretary-General's Report provides an important framework for us to assess how we should be confronting this universal problem. First, a multifaceted, multipronged approach has to be undertaken. The Secretary-General's Disarmament Agenda has a role to play in this regard and so we welcome the fact that it not only features in the Report but that it now boasts the successful establishment of *SALIENT* – a much needed “*vehicle for funding short-term limited-budget projects with an immediate impact.*”

Another important aspect relates to the acknowledged need to ensure effective coordination on small arms, including by the UN system. For this reason, we applaud the work of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms, including on the UN Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), which saw its recent membership increased with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism joining the mechanism in 2018. As a beneficiary of the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, we also welcome the increased number of projects – a total of 140 – that have been funded since the Facility was created in 2013. We are equally pleased with the variety of projects that been supported over the period.

The work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLiREC) deserves special commendation. We have had a very fruitful relationship with the Centre over the years, specifically in the area of Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM), including arms and ammunition destruction and tracing activities. We look forward to deepening this relationship.

Madam Chair,

Significant strides are also being made at the national level to ensure that the requisite legislative and policy frameworks are in place to address the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. As part of this endeavour, we have commenced the engagement of private security companies to avoid diversion of licit arms and ammunition into the illicit market in order to increase the accountability for private stockpiles.

Mindful of the high risk to public safety and potential devastating impact of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), as well as the need for a national regulatory regime to treat with them, the Ministry of National Security has drafted a policy to regulate the importation of these items.

Jamaica was also pleased to host, in collaboration with the Government of Germany and UNLiREC, a Regional Seminar on Conventional Ammunition Management, from 10th to 11th September, 2019. The Seminar brought together representatives from across the Caribbean to identify national and regional priorities in preparation for the upcoming meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) in 2020.

A major challenge for us is border control. Jamaica has approximately 145 unofficial ports. Consequently, maritime and border control is a major priority for the Government. To strengthen capability, a Maritime Patrol Aircraft was recently procured and an integrated hanger constructed. Nonetheless, the support of our partners remains relevant.

Madam Chair,

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) continues to be a driving force in tackling issues related to the illicit trade in small arms. We welcome the steady progress being made in the deliberations of States Parties on a number of issues, not least of which is the session on diversion, in which Jamaica has been actively engaged as Facilitator of the Working Group. We also commend the efforts of the Latvian Presidency of the Fifth Conference of States Parties (CSP5) for championing the gendered impact of armed violence in the context of the ATT. In support of its broader application, we further wish to highlight that Jamaica, in its report under the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UNPoA), has been drawing attention to the role of women in decision-making and implementation processes relating to the PoA and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

Madam Chair,

We endorse the need for greater efforts to be placed on better assessing the type of support that is needed at the national level, as determined by the potential recipients and on the strength of their own targets and goals. As a result, we are open to the ideas conveyed in the Secretary-General's reports and believe that they bode well for the augmented implementation of the UNPoA and the ITI. We take comfort in the fact that the major characteristics of the current PoA will remain intact and that there will continue to be scope for implications and developments at the global level to be appropriately tracked. Even with this more inward-looking focus and the need to improve measurability and accountability at the national level, international cooperation will remain a priority. Consequently, we would share the Secretary-General's expectation that "*opportunities for international assistance and cooperation would increase*" with these new approaches.

In closing, Madam Chair, let me just reiterate Jamaica's support for the effective implementation of measures aimed at curbing the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and stand ready to work with both our governmental partners as well as those from civil society, in addressing the problem.

I thank you.